

Worries mount for private, non-profit childcare centres ahead of N.S. pre-primary rollout ^[1]

Author: Grudic, Jennifer

Source: Global News

Format: Article

Publication Date: 7 Aug 2017

AVAILABILITY

Read online ^[2]

EXCERPTS

As Nova Scotia continues to move towards the anticipated pre-primary rollout, many private and non-profit child care program providers are feeling on edge.

"They have children currently enrolled in their programs, the [school] board is telling parents not to withdraw their children on the chance that the program will not start on its intended date," said Pam Streeter, a member of the Private Licensed Administrators Association.

"It really puts them at a huge disadvantage to budget and plan for the coming year."

Although the new sites have already been selected, there is still a lot of uncertainty as to exactly when they will be ready for business. The online pre-registration form states:

"Pre-Primary programs will open on various dates, depending on when staff are available and the environment is ready for children. "

As of now, those dates are likely to be sometime around the end of September.

Streeter, who also operates a childcare centre in Hammonds Plains, said many private owners and non-profit administrators are bracing for what could be a sudden drop in pre-primary aged enrolment once the government announces more concrete plans for the 30 new proposed sites.

"Now not only will we lose staff, and we lose children, will we lose our centres. And then what will families do when they have infants and toddlers when their centres are closing?" said Streeter.

"That's why we want to have that conversation with government to help mitigate the impact these programs are going to have."

On Thursday, Nova Scotia Education Minister Zach Churchill said there's already upwards of 750 children pre-registered for pre-primary. He said he is "hopeful" there will be enough staff to accommodate them as the hiring process continues.

"I'm not going to fool myself and think it's not going to be a challenge to hire these positions," said Churchill.

"We will not open any of these classrooms if we do not have the professionally trained people to staff them."

Lisa Davey is with the Non Profit Directors Association of Nova Scotia. She says they're worried about what a potentially quick turnaround could mean for the children leaving their centres to go to a new pre-primary site.

"The danger of rushing it is that the pedagogy, the environment and the operational issues won't be optimal," said Davey, adding her membership feels as though they've been left in the dark.

"I think that time is a huge factor here. There's no way it can be done in this period of time."

She said their organization has reached out to government to express their concerns and are hoping for a more positive and collaborative experience moving forward.

"Right now we're really in a holding pattern," said Davey.

"We don't know what's going to happen."

-reprinted from Global News

Related link: Nova Scotia pre-primary program gets mixed response ^[3]

Region: Nova Scotia ^[4]

Tags: budget ^[5]
child care ^[6]
full-day early learning ^[7]

Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/17/08/worries-mount-private-non-profit-childcare-centres-ahead-ns-pre>

Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/17/08/worries-mount-private-non-profit-childcare-centres-ahead-ns-pre> [2]
<https://globalnews.ca/news/3655732/worries-mount-for-private-non-profit-childcare-centres-ahead-of-n-s-pre-primary-rollout/> [3]
<http://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/17/07/nova-scotia-pre-primary-program-gets-mixed-response> [4]
<https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7853> [5] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/budget> [6] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/child-care> [7] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/8149>